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Spring 2-1-2001

### PSC 387.01: Legislative Politics

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA  
Department of Political Science

PSc 387 Legislative Politics  
Spring 2001  
Dr. Laslovich

Office: LA 354  
Hrs: MWF 1-2:00, or  
by app't (4418)

Course Description

Analysis of the structure, processes, and politics of the U.S. Congress. Topics include member-constituent relations, party leadership, the committee system, and House-Senate relations. Case studies will analyze and assess the role of Congress in the policy-making process. Particular emphasis will be placed on the Congressional-presidential relations in light of the 2000 election.

Texts

The following texts are required reading and are available at the University Bookstore:

Bond, Jon R. and Richard Fleisher, eds. Polarized Politics: Congress and the President in a Partisan Era. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2000;

Davidson, Roger and Walter Oleszek. Congress and Its Members. 7th edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2000; and

Sinclair, Barbara, Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S. Congress. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2000.

Course Requirements - Students will be evaluated upon the following basis:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Exam 1 (March 5) Topics I-III .....                             | 20% |
| Research paper prospectus ( <b>Due Feb. 23 IN CLASS</b> ) ..... | 20% |
| Exam 2 (April 11) Topics IV-VI .....                            | 20% |
| Research Paper ( <b>Due April 30 IN CLASS</b> ) .....           | 20% |
| Final Exam (Mon., May 14, 3:20-5:20) Topics VII-IX .....        | 20% |

NOTE - **ALL** writing assignments must be submitted to complete the course.

- Late papers will not be graded but nonetheless must be submitted.
- A "C" letter grade is required to receive a "passing" mark for the P/NP grading option.

Drop/Add Deadlines

Feb. 16 - Last day to add/drop by Dial Bear and to receive a full refund for classes.

March 12 - Last day to drop/add (no refund).

May 11 - Last day for drop petitions.

Makeup Exam Policy

Students **excused** from a scheduled examination may write a makeup exam. In fairness to all students, the instructor must approve exam absences.

Research Papers

Students select a research topic of their choice. Research paper prospectuses are **DUE Feb 23 IN CLASS**. Please note that this is to be a research paper. Consequently the amount of research undertaken, and the ability

Research Papers (continued)

to marshal that information effectively, will be crucial in the evaluation of the paper. The paper should range between 10 to 15 double-spaced typed pages.

The Classroom Learning Environment (authored by Dr. Ronald Perrin, Professor of Political Theory)

Wherever the learning process takes place (for example, in the library or the seclusion of one's study) it does so best when there are a minimum of distractions. This requirement poses special challenges for the learning that takes place in the lecture hall or the classroom, where the possibility of distractions is the greatest. In order to establish and maintain a supportive learning environment for my students I will not tolerate the few individuals who might be prone to a) come to class late or leave early, b) carry on private conversations during class, or c) use the lecture hall/classroom as an opportunity to read material, such as the Kaimin, that is not relevant to the subject matter under consideration. The only exception to these conditions concern students whose work schedules or unanticipated appointments require them to arrive for class late or leave early. In these circumstances I would appreciate knowing of the circumstance before it occurs and, in all such instances, request that students do so as unobtrusively as possible. Thank you.

Lecture Topics and Readings

- I Introduction – The “Two Congresses”  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapters 1 and 2.
- II Congressional Campaigns and Voter Behavior  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapters 3-5.
- III Congressional Leaders and Political Parties  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapter 6; and  
Bond and Fleisher, chapters 3 and 4.
- IV Committees, Rules and Procedures  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapters 7 and 8.
- V Congressional Decision-Making and Unorthodox Lawmaking  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapter 9; and  
Sinclair, passim.
- VI Congress and the Presidency  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapters 10 and 11; and  
Bond and Fleisher, chapters 1,2,5,6,7,8 and 10.
- VII Organized Interests and Congressional Budget Making  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapters 12 and 13.
- VIII Congress and National Security  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapter 14.
- IX Conclusion  
Davidson and Oleszek, chapter 15.